

## Message Text

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51

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PRS-01

SP-02 PM-03 NSC-05 SS-15 NEA-10 ACDA-05 NASA-01 OES-03

H-02 /073 W

----- 072353

R 261440Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO RUEHCSECSTATE WASHDC 7382

INFO RUQMABAMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 344

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

RUQMDIAMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO055

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

ZENAMEMBASSQ PRETORIA 738

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG

CINCLANT NORFOLK VA

COMIDEASTFOR

DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 1125

CINCUSNAVEUR AND CINCLANT FOR POLADS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR US MA

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA ON INDIAN OCEAN

REF: A. TANANARIVE 1123; BM STATE 137931

SUMMARYC PRESIDENT OF SUPREME REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL COMMANDER  
DIDIER RATSIRAKA, WHO TOOK POWER JUNE 15, RESTATED HIS VIEWS  
ON INDIAN OCEAN ISSUES IN MEETING WITH CHARGE JUNE 25.  
CHARGE SHOWED HIM PHOTOS OF SOVIET INSTALLATIONS AT BERBERA.  
END SUMMARYM

1. IN DISCUSSION WITH CHARGE JUNE 25 FOCUSED ON NASA TRACKING  
STATION IN MADAGASCAR, PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA TOOK OPPORTUNITY  
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TO RESTATE SOME OF HIS VIEWS ON INDIAN OCEAN ISSUES WHICH

PROVED TO BE SAME AS BASIC GOMR POLICY WHEN HE WAS FOREIGN MINISTER IN RAMANANTSOA GOVERNMENT (5/72-2/75). RATSIRAKA BEGAN BY SAYING "AS MILITARY MAN HE KNEW NASA STATION HAD MILITARY AND STRATEGIC CAPABILITIES." HE GAVE US MONITORING BY SATELLITE OF FRELIMO TROOP MOVEMENTS IN MOZAMBIQUE AS EXAMPLE. WHEN CHARGE DENIED NASA STATION WAS USED FOR SUCH PURPOSES AND THAT IT WAS US GOVERNMENT POLICY NOT TO DO SO, RATSIRAKA REPLIED THAT NASA STATION AT LEAST HAD POTENTIAL TO DO SO AND HAD STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE. HE NOTED THAT HE WAS UNDER PRESSURE FROM SOVIETS TO LET THEM BUILD TRACKING STATION.

2. HE THEN SAID, "WE WELL UNDERSTAND OUR STRATEGIC POSITION. WE HAVE CHOSEN TO BE NEUTRAL IN THE GREAT POWER RIVALRY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN," HE CONTINUED. HE SAID THAT UNLIKE MAURITIUS, WHICH WELCOMES BOTH US AND SOVIET SHIP VISITS, MALAGASY GOVERNMENT HAS CHOSEN TO EXCLUDE ALL. CHARGE RESPONDED SAYING THAT GOMR POLICY WAS QUITE CLEAR AND US HAD NOT EVEN ASKED FOR SHIP VISITS SINCE POLICY ANNOUNCED. RATSIRAKA THEN SAID HE WAS TROUBLED BY DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION AND SAID HE HOPED CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL WOULD BE DENIED. CHARGE RESPONDED THAT DIEGO GARCIA AND US PRESENCE IN INDIAN OCEAN DID NOT POSE ANY THREAT TO MADAGASCAR OR OTHER INDIAN OCEAN LITTORAL NATIONA; US ACTIVITIES WERE BASED ON BROADER CONCERNS FOCUSSED ON SOVIET ACTIVITIES. CHARGE THEN ASKED RATSIRAKA IF HE WOULD BE INTERESTED IN SEEING PHOTOS OF SOVIET FACILITIES AT BERBERA. HE SAID YES, LOOKED AT THREE PHOTOS FAIRLY CAREFULLY AND THEN PUT THE OTHERS ASIDE SAYING, "THAT'S SOMALIA'S BUSINESS." HE DID NOT QUESTION AUTHENTICITY OF PHOTOS.

3. EMBASSY COMMENT:

WHAT RATSIRAKA MEANT WHEN HE SAID "WE WELL UNDERSTAND OUR STRATEGIC POSITION," IS SHORTHAND EXPRESSION OF HIS BELIEF THAT MADAGASCAR IS OF KEY STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE IN INDIAN OCEAN, AND CONSEQUENTLY, THE OBJECT OF INTENSE GREAT POWER INTEREST. THIS IS CLEARLY DOMINANT THEME IN HIS THINKING AND THAT OF OTHER MALAGASY OFFICIALS; IT STRONGLY COLORS HIS ATTITUDES ON INDIAN OCEAN ISSUES. AS INDICATED ABOVE THOSE

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ATTITUDES AND POLICIES HAVE NOT CHANGED. PHOTOS OF BERBERA WERE BROUGHT TO MEETING IN EVENT OPENING PRESENTED ITSELF AFTER DISCUSSION WITH BRITISH AMBASSADOR (PER REFTEL B).  
ELFERS

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MILITARY BASES, BERBERA, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 26 JUN 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** RowellE0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA ON INDIAN OCEAN  
**TAGS:** PFOR, US, MA, XO, (RATSIRAKA, DIDIER)  
**To:** SS  
**Type:** TE  
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